

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 103

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SANA PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

COMIDEASTFOR PRIORITY

UNCLAS DJIBOUTI 0164

EO: 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV, PINS, FT

SUBJ: INDEPENDENCE FOR DJIBOUTI

REF: DJIBOUTI 154 (NOTAL)

1. INDEPENDENCE FOR THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI ARRIVED AT ONE
MOMENT AFTER MIDNIGHT 27 JUNE TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF 21 CANNON
SALUTES FROM THE FRENCH AIRCRAFT CARRIER "FOCH", IN THE HARBOR,
A FIREWORKS DISPLAY, A FLAG-RAISING AND A POWER FAILURE WHICH
PLUNGED THE CITY INTO DARKNESS FOR OVER ONE HOUR. PRESIDENT
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HASSAN GOULED APTIDON, ARMED WITH A FRESH MANDATE AS PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC GIVEN BY THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES ON 24 JUNE,
GAVE SEVERAL ADDRESSES DURING THE COURSE OF THE TWO-DAY INDE-
PENDENCE CEREMONIES, ALL WITH SIMILAR THEMES: THE NEED TO WORK
THE NEED FOR UNITY AND THE NEED FOR PEACE. PRESIDENT GOULED S
SENSITIVITY TO THE SPECIAL NEEDS TO INTEGRATE THE LOCAL AFAR
COMMUNITY INTO ALL ASPECTS OF THE INDEPENDENCE PROCESS LED

TO A SEPARATE FLAG-RAISING CEREMONY AND SPEECH IN THE ARHIBA TOWNSHIP FOLLOWING THE MAIN CEREMONIES BEFORE THE PRESIDENT PPALACE.

2. DESPITE A CONSIDERABLE CRUSH IN THE APPROACHES TO THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE AND A BREAKTHROUGH BY THE CROWD WHICH WAS HALTED BY FRENCH GENDARMES WITH LOCKED ARMS, THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS OF ANY KIND REPORTED IN THE NEW STATE DURING THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS. A MILITARY PARADE, VARIOUS FOLKLORIC SPECTACLES AND OTHER EVENTS HAVE BEEN AMPLY REPORTED BY THE MANY U.S. AND OTHER CORRESPONDANTS PRESENT.

3. FLCS CONTINGENT OF ABOUT 300 MEMBERS (SEE REFTTEL) WAS PERMITTED INTO TERRITORY ON 24 JUNE AND LODGED IN LOCAL LYCEE. THEY WERE NOT PERMITTED MARCH IN VARIOUS PARADES ALTHOUGH TWO FLOATS CELEBRATING MEMORY OF MOHAMED HARBI, NATIONALIST HERO OF THE 50 S, DID MAKE IMPROMPTU TOUR OF CITY. REMAINDER OF ORIGINAL GROUP, ESTIMATED AT 3000, STILL AT LOYADA, WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN REPORTEDLY TOLD THEY MUST REMAIN FOR THREE MONTHS. THERE IS A CERTAIN HEIGHTENED TENSION IN CITY, AND PRINCOFF SAW FIRST STONE THROWN IN CITY ON MORNING 28 JUNE, AIMED AT PASSING FRENCH MILITARY VEHICLE.

4. LISTS OF THE VARIOUS DELEGATIONS ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE BECAUSE OF MANY LAST-MINUTE CHANGES IN THE ACTUAL COMPOSITION OF THESE DELEGATIONS. THE PRESIDENTS OF ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA
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DID NOT FINALLY ATTEND, DESPITE ANTICIPATION THAT THEY WOULD BOTH ARRIVE AT THE LAST MINUTE AND BOTH COUNTRIES WERE REPRESENTED AT VICE PRESIDENT LEVEL. A LOCAL STRINGER S REPORT (LATER REPORTED ON VOA AND RADIO MOGADISCIO) THAT ETHIOPIAN VICE PRESIDENT ATNAFU HAD WALKED OUT ON ONE OF THE JUNE 27 CEREMONIES ALSO TURNED OUT TO HAVE NO DIPLOMATIC SUBSTANCE: ATNAFU REPORTEDLY WAS TIRED FROM A VERY EARLY MORNING DEPARTURE FROM ADDIS AND LEFT HIS DELEGATION BEHIND WHILE HE RESTED UP FOR A LATER LUNCHEON PLANNED FOR THE CHIEFS OF DELEGATION.

5. THE FLOOD OF MESSAGES OF RECOGNITION AND SOLIDARITY FROM A LARGE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, PRIMARILY ARAB, AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN, AS WELL AS THE FLIGHTS OF RHETORIC FROM CERTAIN NEIGHBORS, HAVE BEEN WELL REPORTED BY FBIS AND OTHER CHANNELS. EGYPT WAS THE FIRST COUNTRY TO EXCHANGE RECOGNITIONS WITH DJIBOUTI, AT 12:01AM ON 27 JUNE. THE MANY STATEMENTS EMANATING FROM ADDIS AND MOGADISCIO IN WHICH EACH STATE PLEDGES ITSELF TO PROTECT DJIBOUTI S SOVEREIGNTY ENGENDER LITTLE FEELING OF SECURITY IN DJIBOUTI.

6. IN ALL OF THIS PERIOD, THERE WAS AT LEAST ONE GOOD OMEN FOR THE PEOPLE OF DJIBOUTI. USUALLY JUNE AND SEPTEMBER ARE THE PEAK

MONTHS FOR BOTH HUMIDITY AND TEMPERATURE IN TORRID DJIBOUTI.
IN FACT LOCAL PRESS REPORTED THE SEASON HIGH OF 112 DEGREES
(FARENHEIT) ON JUNE 16, AND EVERYONE EXPECTED TEMPERATURES EVEN
HIGHER FOR THE END OF THE END OF THE MONTH. INEXPLICABLY,
THE WEATHER WAS MILD DURING THE ENTIRE WEEK PRECEDING THE
INDEPENDENCE FESTIVITIES, AND THE TEMPERATURE IS NOT BELIEVED
TO HAVE GONE OVER 100 DEGRESS DURING THE VARIOUS CEREMONIES.

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